

**MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF SEAT PLEASANT  
REGULAR WORK SESSION  
MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014  
6:00P.M.**

**1. OPENING**

**1.1.1 Call to Order**

Council President Yeargin called the meeting to order at 5:59p.m.

**1.1.2 Roll Call**

Present: Mayor Eugene Grant (Late), Councilmember Johnie L. Higgs, Sr., Councilmember Eugene Kennedy, Councilmember Kelly Porter, Councilmember Gerald R. Raynor, Sr., Councilmember Elenora Simms, Councilmember Aretha Stephenson (Excused), Councilmember Reveral Yeargin

Staff: Robert L. Ashton, City Treasurer, Orson Carter, Assistant City Treasurer (Late), LaTasha C. Gatling, City Administrator, Dashaun N. Lanham, City Clerk

**1.1.3 Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance:**

The invocation was given by Councilmember Porter

**1.1.4. Approval of Agenda**

It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Raynor to approve the agenda with modification to Legislation 3.3. Ordinance O-14-12 Collection of Outstanding Fees and Fines. The motion carried.

**2. PRESENTATIONS:**

**2.1. Eugene W. Grant, Mayor Presentation of the FY2014-2015 Proposed Budget**

- Mayor Grant stated that in accordance to the Charter they are required to present a budget to the Council by April 1, 2014.
- Mayor Grant stated that they had a very good process, a little later than he would have liked to start.
- Mayor Grant stated that the process started with the staff talking with the City Administrator discussing what they wanted to see in their budget. They negotiated and went back and forward before the document was presented to him.

- Mayor Grant stated that from a cursor overview it looks really good and he would be discussing with Ms. Gatling the goals and objectives to ensure that they are measurable.
- Mayor Grant stated that he will be working with Ms. Gatling over the year on the goals and objectives.
- Mayor Grant stated that the criteria is to assist the Council in evaluating the City Administrator and the City Administrator to evaluate the staff.
- Mayor Grant stated that it is easy to evaluate the City Clerk based on the legislation being produced and submitted to the Department of Legislative Services.
- Mayor Grant stated that the Real Property taxes is still at 58% and \$11.00 on Personal Property taxes remain the same.
- Mayor Grant stated that the Business License taxes has increased by \$15,000
- Mayor Grant stated that the General Fund Budget Decrease by \$485,877, the reduction relates to the Speed Camera.
- The ten significant changes are the City Administrator salary, consolidation of Office Supplies under the City Administrator with the Central Store, salary upgrades for three positions with additional duties.
- Mayor Grant stated that the copier systems will be generating a report to ensure we control the consumption of paper.
- The Maintenance Contracts has been placed under the City Administrator budget.
- Mayor Grant stated that they wanted to understand the true cost of services, and this allows the City Administrator to streamline processes and manage each department effectively.
- The maintenance contract has been delineated under the City Administrator for the legal fees.
- The IT Services contract will be delineated, as well.
- The use of the gas will be under the Public Works Department to be managed by the Transportation Officer along with the maintenance of the vehicles.
- Mayor Grant stated the conversion of the Human Resources Officer to a contract position. He stated that he tried to do it last year, but maybe the Council will accept it under Ms. Gatling.
- Mayor Grant stated that this is not about a person, but services, as the City does not have enough work for a full-time staff person in that position.

- Mayor Grant stated that the new payroll company provides Human Resources services and in accordance to the contract we are paying for the services twice.
- Mayor Grant stated that the desire is to hire a full-time Grant Writer.
- Mayor Grant stated that the Administrative Assistant will be providing ancillary services to the City Clerk and Community Services Department.
- The pay increases will be for the City Administrator, Administrative Assistant, Assistant City Treasurer, City Clerk, Transportation Officer, Laborer Maintenance position.
- Mayor Grant stated that in each position that is getting a salary upgrade they are also getting assigned additional duties.
- Mayor Grant stated that the other staff members are getting an increase of 5%
- Mayor Grant stated that the employees will be getting a 3% salary increase and a 2% Cost of Living increase.
- Mayor Grant stated that he act bequest to Ms. Gatling in the budget process.
- The City Council did not have any questions for Mayor Grant regarding the proposed budget.
- Mayor Grant stated that it is not that much different to what we had done in the past.
- Mayor Grant stated that the Transportation Officer will be responsible for the monitoring of the gasoline and the vehicles, which she will be trained on the system.
- Mayor Grant stated that he needs for the Council to stop limiting themselves to MML and NLC.
- Mayor Grant stated that when you chair a committee you can go to training regarding the committee to expand your knowledge.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the training budget has been increased to ensure that each staff person takes at least two classes. She stated that the staff is lacking including herself in training. She joined ICMA and would like to go to their conference and the registration is \$1000.
- Councilmember Kennedy stated that some of the business in the City do not have a business license.
- Ms. Gatling stated that every business has paid for their licenses and we cannot control if they have two or ten business under that one license.
- Mr. Ashton stated that the Code Enforcement and Nuisance & Abatement Officers checks the use and occupancy permit in each of the businesses.
- Councilwoman Simms inquired if we need two Code Enforcement Officers.

- Mayor Grant stated that we have one person in the position the Nuisance and Abatement Coordinator is a different position.
- Ms. Gatling stated that we do need both positions as their responsibilities have been divided with one person focusing on the business and the other the residential.
- Ms. Gatling stated that they have a new work order system, which is now electronic and she feels that citations can be issued while they are in the streets.
- Ms. Gatling stated that we focus on the residential properties and the businesses are getting away with violations.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she has the Code Enforcement Officer focusing on the businesses.
- Mayor Grant inquired of the hours of the Code Enforcement and Nuisance and Abatement Coordinator. He wanted to know if they worked on the week-end and in the evening.
- Ms. Gatling stated that Nuisance and Abatement Coordinator works every Saturday.
- Mayor Grant stated that the evening hours will give the department the opportunity to knock on the doors to inform the residents.
- Councilwoman Simms stated she feels that the one day review of the budget will not be enough for the Council.
- It was stated that the Council had selected two days to review the budget.

### **3. LEGISLATION**

**3.1. Resolution R-14-12 Competitive Bid Waiver for the Purchase of a Police Department Vehicle.** Resolution R-14-12 was introduced by the City Council on Monday, April 7, 2014 and the first reading was held. It was motioned by Councilmember Raynor and seconded by Councilmember Higgs to approve Resolution R-14-12. The motion carried and was unanimously approved.

**3.2. Ordinance O-14-11 FY2013-2014 Budget Amendment for Acquisition of Property-5718 Martin Luther King Jr., Highway.** Ordinance O-14-11 was introduced by City Council on Monday, March 31, 2014 and the first reading was held. The second reading was held on Monday, April 7, 2014. It was motioned by Councilmember Higgs and seconded by Councilmember Raynor to approve Ordinance O-14-11. The motion carried and the Ordinance was unanimously approved.

### **3.3. Ordinance O-14-12 Collection of Outstanding Fees and Fines was approved for discussion.**

## **4. REPORTS:**

### **4.1. Mayor's Report**

- Mayor Grant stated that his report was the presentation of the FY2014-2015 Proposed Budget.

### **4.2. City Administrator Report:**

- Ms. Gatling stated that she has a few updates for the City Council.
- Ms. Gatling stated that she will be going to settlement on Wednesday, April 9, 2014 for the Gaskin property.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Police Department will be doing foot patrol once a week in every ward throughout the summer.
- Councilmember Higgs inquired if the officers are walking in sets of two.
- Ms. Gatling stated that it may be more than two officers, but they are going back to foot patrol.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the new windows will be installed in City Hall on Friday, April 11, 2014.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the new HVAC system was installed and the windows along with the system was paid for with grant money.
- Ms. Gatling stated that Prince George's County had agreed to demolish the houses located at 6308 Foote St., 6402 G St., and 510 68th St.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the business and rental fee collection is in progress.
- Ms. Gatling stated that an account has been set-up with Bank of America for the Gaskin property purchase.

### **4.3. Council Committee Report**

- The City Council did not have reports for the month of April

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **5.1. Surplus Property Legislation**

- Ms. Gatling that this was discussed last month with the Council on how to dispose of surplus property for the City.
- Councilwoman Simms inquired if the property is being tagged.
- Ms. Gatling stated the items are being tagged, but they are in the storage bins.

### **5.2. June Public Session Meeting**

- Council President Yeargin stated that the Public Session will be held on Monday, June 16, 2014.

### **5.3. City Council Recess**

- The Council will be recessing in August and the Resolution will be prepared for July.

### **5.4. Ethics Commission Annual Report**

- Councilwoman Simms stated that the Commission suppose to meet once a year and provide a report to the Mayor and Council.
- It was requested for the City Clerk to send a letter to the commission to see if they are interested in remaining as the Seat Pleasant Ethics Commission.

### **5.5. Ethics Commission Vacant Seat**

- It was requested by the City Council for the City Clerk to send a letter to the committee.
- The City Clerk stated that we will verify and provide the Council with a written update regarding the protocol.

### **5.6. Seat Pleasant Hosting of PGCMA Meeting in May**

- Ms. Gatling stated that the City will be hosting the meeting on Thursday, May 15, 2014 at 6:00p.m., at the Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Department.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

### **6.1. Update on Demolition of Properties**

- Ms. Gatling stated that she sent an e-mail to Council regarding the demolition of the properties.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the property on G Street will not be demolished due to a recent purchase.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the properties on Foote and 68h Street will be demolished by the County.

### **6.2. Proposed Accounting Manual**

- Councilmember Porter stated that the Council needs to decide on the process of providing receipts or an affidavit.
- Councilmember Porter stated that whatever the Council does it will be required of the staff too.
- Councilmember Simms stated that her recommendation is that the Council as a whole make a decision on the document, as it should not have gone back into committee.



- Councilmember Porter read the response from the City Attorney in the e-mail.
- Councilmember Porter stated that the decision from the committee was to do both with regards to receipt and affidavit.
- Mayor Grant stated that the City Attorney statement does not say that the Council is not exempt from providing receipts. He stated that he agrees with the City Attorney.
- Mayor Grant asked Councilmember Porter why does he feel that Council do not need to provide receipts.
- Councilmember Porter stated that the committee stated that the Council can provide a receipt or an affidavit.
- Mayor Grant stated that we are the leaders and we should set the example to the employees.
- Councilmember Porter stated that if the person comes back and they are short on the receipts regarding the money spent by \$5.00 will the City require them to pay the difference.
- Councilmember Porter stated that many Councilmember has stated that they spend more money than the per diem provides.
- Ms. Gatling inquired on how will she advise her staff on the travel regarding the receipts.
- It was stated that the employees should follow the proposed Accounting Manual regarding the providing of receipts.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the Personnel Rules and Regulations Manual does not state the staff must provide receipts for travel on training.
- Ms. Gatling stated that it requires the employees to provide a receipt for non routine travel.
- Mayor Grant stated that you should be required to provide a receipt when using tax payer money. He stated that it is morally wrong and unethical.
- Councilwoman Simms stated that she recommends that at the beginning of the next fiscal year receipts should be provided.
- Councilmember Kennedy stated that he seconds the recommendation of the Councilwoman Simms.
- Councilmember Porter stated that the recommendation from the committee was to remove the section which states that if the receipts are not provided the City Administrator can withhold the check. The committee wants that section removed.
- The City Council requested for the Finance and Budget Committee to provide a written recommendation on the Proposed Accounting Manual.

### **6.3. Police Department Trailer Update**

- Ms. Gatling stated that the Police Department are not getting trailers, but a modular building.
- Ms. Gatling stated the City is waiting on letters from the utilities company to confirm that they have been shut-off.
- Ms. Gatling stated that Miss Utility had come out, but they marked across the street from the site.
- Ms. Gatling stated that the property site has two addresses.

### **7 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 7.1. **AARP Tax Preparation, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers, Every Wednesday, February 5, 2014-Wednesday, April 9, 2014 from 10:00a.m.-3:00p.m. Appointment Required**
- 7.2. **Public Session, Monday, March 17, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 7:00p.m.**
- 7.3. **Black History Month Activity, Black Wax Museum, Friday, March 7, 2014, MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND!!! Seats are limited , bus will leave City Hall at 8:30a.m.**
- 7.4. **Ward V Meeting, Wednesday, March 19, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 5:30p.m.**
- 7.5. **PGCMA Meeting, Thursday, March 20, 2014, City of Greenbelt, 25 Crescent Rd., Greenbelt, MD from 6:00p.m.-9:00p.m.**
- 7.6. **Ward II Community Meeting, Thursday, March 27, 2014, Pleasant Homes Community Center, 6810 Greig St., Seat Pleasant, MD from 6:00p.m.-8:00p.m.**
- 7.7. **Regular Work Session, Monday, April 7, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 6:00p.m.**
- 7.8. **Public Session, Monday, April 14, 2014, Seat Pleasant City Hall-Council Chambers at 7:00p.m.**

**ADJOURN**-The meeting adjourned at 8:57p.m.

Submitted by,



Dashaun N. Lanham  
City Clerk